LOCAL WIA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN GUIDANCE,  
Updated for PY 2011

(Note: Updated guidance is bolded and italicized.)

Area Contacts

1. Name of Area:

   Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Development Area-14

2. Name, address, and phone number for Chief Local Elected Official

   Honorable Teresa Pike-Tomlinson, Mayor
   Columbus Consolidated Government
   P.O. Box 1340
   Columbus, Georgia 31902-1340
   Phone Number: 706-653-4712

3. Name of organization administering the grant

   Columbus Consolidated Government
   Job Training Division (WIA)
   P.O. Box 1340
   Columbus, Georgia 31902-1340

   Name, address, and phone number for Local Area Director

   Howard T. Pendleton
   Columbus Consolidated Government Annex
   420 Tenth Street, 1st Floor
   P.O. Box 1340
   Columbus, Georgia 31902-1340

   Fax Number: 706-653-4533
   Email Address: hpendleton@columbusga.org

4. Name, address, and organization of the Workforce Investment Board Chairperson

   Chester R. Randolph
   Caldwell Realtors
   7309 Westport Loop
   Midland, GA 31820
5. Name, address, and organization of the Youth Council Chairperson

Mrs. Ernestine Ramsey
A.J. McClung YMCA, Inc.
1175 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
Columbus, GA  31906

6. Name, address, and phone number of the area's One-Stop operator(s). List all the sites the organization manages and indicate with an asterisk sites that are WIA comprehensive service sites

**One-Stop Operator:**
Columbus Consolidated Government (Job Training Division)
P.O. Box 1340
420 Tenth Street
Columbus, GA  31902-1340
Phone:  706-653-4529  Fax:  706-653-4533

**Comprehensive One-Stop**
Georgia Department of Labor
Columbus Career Center
700 Veterans Parkway
Columbus, Georgia  31904

**Itinerate One-Stop Sites**

a) Muscogee County School District
   Tillinghurst Adult Education
   514 Morris Road
   Columbus, Georgia  31907

b) Columbus Technical College
   928 Manchester Expressway
   Columbus, Georgia  31906

c) Department of Health & Human Services Offices
   Counties of Quitman, Randolph, Stewart, Clay, Muscogee

7. Web site address, Facebook page, You Tube channel, or other social media for the area (if any):  www.columbusga.org

8. Name and phone number of the individual(s) with primary responsibility for plan development: Howard T. Pendleton, WIA Director, Phone Number: (706) 653-4529
Plan Signatures

Name of Area: Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Area Fourteen (WIA-14)

Chief Local Elected Official

Name

Date: 1/11/2012

Local Area Director

Name

Date: 1/9/12

Local Workforce Investment Board Chairperson

Name

Date: 11/24/12
I. Vision and Goals

Provide the vision for the area's workforce development system and list the goals that have been established to achieve the vision. Review and incorporate the priorities from ETA’s National Strategic Directions (TEGL 13-06) to address local vision and goals, as appropriate.

*Our Vision:*

*To build a seamless workforce development system that increases the pool of job ready and skilled workers in the local area through education and employment programs, services, and training opportunities that create career pathways designed to enhance the skill sets and marketability of our citizens resulting in a rise out of poverty to self-sufficiency; and, that addresses the needs and demands of area employers for skilled workers and the economic growth of our communities. To enhance the productivity and competitiveness of our citizenry, strengthen the collaborative partnership of economic development businesses, and ensure the transparency and accountability of workforce funds.*

*Our System Building Goals:*

- *To meet or exceed the performance goals established by the Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Area.*
- *To provide continuous development and improvement of a workforce system with multiple access points and services tailored to meet the needs of our community and workforce area.*
- *Provide ongoing training to partners and staff to include sharing of information and data among partnering agencies that will enhance the quality of programs and services available to our citizens.*
- *To broaden the pool of skilled workers needed by local businesses.*
- *To provide quality services and training programs that are conducive to the demands of local employers for skilled workers;*
- *To increase partnerships with businesses to identify those skill sets that are needed to assist citizens of our local workforce community who are seeking to enhance their quality of life become more competitive and marketable in the local labor market.*
- *To identify the needs of our employers through continuous partnership and collaboration to ensure appropriate services are being identified and delivered*
- *To promote continuous cross-training of partner staff about each other’s programs;*
• Operate as a talent development system that meet needs of industry and foster a collaborative partnership with economic development to enhance economic prosperity of the local workforce area
• Increase the partnership of private sector businesses in training and employment of individuals participating in our programs
• Enhance customer satisfaction. Assist workers who face unprecedented challenges to retool their skills and re-establish themselves in viable career paths.
  
  Continuously develop and refine innovative service delivery strategies

II. Local Governance

1. Describe how the local workforce development system will be governed to ensure that it is comprehensive, integrated, effective, responsive, and customer-focused. Examples of items you may wish to describe include the local board committee structure and the board's oversight activities. Describe how GDOL career centers and other WIA partners have worked together to promote service integration.

  To ensure a comprehensive, integrated, effective, responsive and customer-focused workforce system, Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Area Fourteen (WIA-14) is governed by a Board, known as the Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Investment Board (hereinafter referred to as the LCWIB or Board). The Board is comprised of member representation from a cross-section of organizations within its workforce area, to include public sector, non-profit and for-profit organizations that govern the local workforce development system. Each member brings to the system years of experience and expertise, that is helpful in developing and implementing programs designed to increase the employability of individuals serviced in the workforce area.

  In addition to the Board, subcommittees are established, that is inclusive of the required Youth Council, to ensure programs are designed to meet the economic demands of the workforce area and to promote accountability and transparency, in accordance with the intent and spirit of the Workforce Investment Act. The Columbus Consolidated Government (referred to as City of Columbus), as Grant Recipient and Administrator, has been delegated the responsibility to ensure that programs and systems are designed, coordinated, implemented, and administered to meet the full requirements of WIA and to address the needs of the local labor market.

  The establishment of these subcommittees enhances the LCWIB’s oversight capabilities through the provision of detailed reporting by the Administrator of program activity performance, funding, compliance, and internal operation of the workforce system. Membership on each of the subcommittees requires a cross-section of Board representation, which further enhances the assurances of integrated services in the local workforce system.
The following outlines a brief description of these subcommittees and their role in enhancing the necessary oversight required. The cross-section of membership within each committee serves to enhance strategies to improve the integration of services provided in the local workforce area.

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:**

Under the authority of the local Board, the Executive Committee is responsible for making decisions that affect the administration and operation of the WIA system and services, activities, and programs administered in accordance with the Workforce Investment Act, on behalf of the Board when convening of the full Board cannot be accomplished in a timely manner. The Executive Committee is required to keep the Board informed of actions taken on its behalf at the next appropriate meeting of the full Board.

Members of the Executive Committee are comprised of the Chairperson of each subcommittee as established by the Board Chairperson. To avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest, contracted agencies and/or providers of service in the system are not appointed to this committee.

With the possibility of a partner representative being selected as chairperson of a committee, such individuals may not be excluded from serving on the Executive Committee; however, such representative must abstain from any voting or discussions relevant to such voting, regarding the agency that may be represented as a provider of service under the local workforce investment system.

**PROGRAM/EVALUATION/SELECTION COMMITTEE:**

Members of this committee represent a cross section of members of the Board. In coordination with the Program Administrator, the committee is responsible to review employment and training needs in the area, to determine population target groups for the area and oversee the functions of the workforce systems functions, and to coordinate with the Program Administrator staff in preparing program plan(s) as required. The committee is further responsible for reviewing solicitation applications submitted by potential deliverers of service within the one-stop system, and make appropriate recommendations regarding the provision of appropriate services in accordance with the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. A summary of each meeting and recommendations held by this committee shall be presented to the LCWIB or to the Executive Committee convened on behalf of the LCWIB for appropriate action. In circumstance where the Executive Committee is the approval authority, the Executive Committee shall subsequently report any actions taken by the committee on
behalf of the LCWIB at the next full board meeting for confirmation of the full board.

➤ **MONITORING/OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE:**

Members of this committee represent a cross section of members of the LCWIB, with responsibility to oversee program activities and internal and external operations of the Workforce Investment System that decreases potential disparities, while strengthening the Board’s oversight capabilities. Program Administrator staff shall conduct internal and external reports of the system and provide reports to the committee for oversight and monitoring purposes. A summary of each meeting and recommendations held by this committee shall be presented to the LCWIB or to the Executive Committee convened on behalf of the LCWIB for appropriate action. In circumstances where the Executive Committee is the approval authority, the Executive Committee shall subsequently report any actions taken by the committee on behalf of the LCWIB at the next full board meeting for confirmation of the full board.

➤ **BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE:**

Members of this committee shall represent a cross section of members of the Board, responsible for conducting oversight of the fiscal accountability and transparency of the local workforce system administered and operated by funds allocated under WIA and Recovery Act funds, and make recommendations where appropriate. Oversight shall be conducted via reports generated by the Program Administrator staff. The Program Administrator staff shall provide report of the system(s) finances in respect to WIA and Recovery Act allocations for this purpose. A summary of each meeting and recommendations held by this committee shall be presented to the LCWIB or to the Executive Committee convened on behalf of the LCWIB for appropriate action. In circumstances where the Executive Committee is the approval authority, the Executive Committee shall subsequently report any actions taken by the committee on behalf of the LCWIB at the next full board meeting for confirmation of the full board.

➤ **MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE:**

Members of this committee shall represent a cross section of members of the Board, with responsibility, to ensure compliance with board membership. Meetings of the membership committee shall occur once during a program year, or when necessary to ensure compliance and oversight of board membership issues. A summary of each meeting and recommendations held by this committee shall be presented to the LCWIB or to the Executive Committee convened on behalf of the LCWIB for appropriate action. In circumstances where the Executive Committee is the approval authority, the
Executive Committee shall subsequently report any actions taken by the committee on behalf of the LCWIB at the next full board meeting for confirmation of the full board.

➢ YOUTH COUNCIL:

In accordance with WIA, Youth Council shall serve as a subgroup to the LCWIB. The Youth Council shall report to the Executive Committee all summaries and recommendations (where appropriate) for LCWIB approval. The LCWIB Chairperson shall appoint a Chairperson to the Youth Council who has expertise in youth issues and the provision of services to youth in the workforce investment area. In accordance with the Workforce Investment Act, it shall be the responsibility of the Youth Council to:

- As determined by the LCWIB Chairperson, assist the Program Administrator’s staff in the development of portions of the local plan that relate to the eligible youth under WIA, as appropriate;

- In coordination with Program Administrator staff, review proposing applications submitted by potential deliverers of service within the one-stop system, and make appropriate recommendations to the Executive Committee regarding appropriate services to be provided in the local area in accordance with the WIA and Recovery Act, where applicable and which may or may not be WIA or Recovery funded.

- Assist staff of the Program Administrator staff in coordinating youth activities in concert with the Evaluation/Selection Committee, and provide summary and recommendations of the Committee(s) to the Executive Committee for appropriate action.

- Shall provide oversight of eligible providers and the WIA System for eligible youth activities to ensure compliance with contractual agreements and WIA. Reports of internal/external monitoring provided by the Program Administrator staff are used for these purposes.

- Ensure transparency and accountability of funds used in accordance with WIA.

The Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Board adopted the following policy to deter any potential concerns regarding “Conflicts of Interests. The policy states, as follows:

A “conflict of interest” is defined as a situation in which a person has a private or personal interest sufficient to appear to influence the objective exercise of his or her official duties. This shall include the “potential for any member of the Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Investment Board and/or officer, employee, or agent of the Columbus Consolidated Government (as Grant Recipient and Administrative
Agent), their organizations and/or immediate family, to receive any financial or material benefits as a result of any purchasing or contracting activity involving federal funds under a WIA grant or contract.

Whenever a potential conflict of interest arises in the conduct of business, the individual concerned must divulge the existence of and the reasons for the potential conflict. This divulgence must be either verbal or in writing to the Chairperson of the Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Investment Board, and the Board will then make the decision whether or not a direct relationship exists.

Should a determination be made that a conflict of interests exists; the affected individual is prohibited from participating in the selection, award, or administration of procurement supported by WIA Act funds.

Should the Board decide that no conflict of interest exists, it must record the nature of the original allegation or divulgence of conflict, and the reason(s) for deciding that a conflict does not exist.

The local GDOL Career Center and other WIA partners work together to promote service integration.

As part of the efforts of the Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Area to promote service integration, the Georgia Department of Labor’s local career center is designated the comprehensive one-stop center. Representatives from other WIA partners are collocated at the Center to promote a cross agency initiatives designed by WIA to provide a no-wrong door approach to services. Quarterly training and focus sessions are conducted as an ongoing measure to strengthen information sharing among agencies regarding benefits and services offered, eligibility criteria of programs, and other resources provided by the respective agencies. These meetings were designed to increase the knowledge of all collaborative partners of WIA that will enhance the services and promote a more customer-focused system.

2. Describe how the local area's staffing is organized with regard to local Workforce Investment Board support and WIA administrative functions. Provide the titles and major activities/roles of the area's key staff.

The Joint Agreement of the Local Elected Officials designates the Mayor, Columbus, Georgia, as primary Chief Elected Official for the Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Area Fourteen (WIA-14). Sequentially, the Mayor of Columbus, Georgia has designated the Columbus Consolidated Government as Grant Recipient and Administrator of all federal funding allocated to the local area. The Grant Recipient and Administrator is responsible to provide support to the local Workforce Investment Board, to conduct all administrative functions of activities under the auspices of WIA; and, to serve as Operator of the One-stop system for Workforce Investment Area Fourteen (WIA-14).
Additionally, the Columbus Consolidated Government is responsible for the budgetary process and for requesting, receiving, distributing and accounting for all WIA funds for the Workforce Investment Board; and accepts liability for all aspects of the program including any repayment of disallowed costs.

Inclusively, the Columbus Consolidated Government is responsible for the following:

a. Assist the Chief Elected Official in developing a roster of potential appointees to the Workforce Investment Board and the Youth Council, which ensures that membership, includes designees required under the Workforce Investment Act.

b. Participate as the primary One-stop Operator of the Lower Chattahoochee One-Stop System to:
   1) Coordinate the provision of services in accordance with the One-Stop System Memorandum of Understanding;
   2) Prepare and maintain a System Operational Procedure in conjunction with all partners;
   3) Recommend policies and procedures for operation of the One-Stop System
   4) Ensure system compliance and operation in accordance with applicable laws and regulations and local board policy.
   5) Assess the degree of customer satisfaction with services provided by the One-Stop System;
   6) Identify appropriate service strategies that are customer focused and meet the demand of customer needs through the one-stop system.
   7) Plan, develop, maintain, and administer the Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Investment Strategic Plan.
   8) Obtain public input during development of the Plan.
   9) Develop “Request for Proposals” for services provided under the Workforce Investment Plan, if appropriate.
  10) Negotiate and contract services to be provided under the Workforce Investment Act Plan, where appropriate.
  11) Financial management of all WIA funded activities.
  12) Procurement and management of all WIA funded property.
  13) Developing and implementing an Individual Training Account (ITA) system, if appropriate.
  14) Fiscal and programmatic monitoring and evaluation of ITAs, supportive services, and training contracts, if appropriate.
  15) Coordinate WIA services and initiatives with appropriate local, state, and federal programs.
  16) Provide contractor and staff training on policies and procedures regarding WIA requirements.
17) Propose policies and procedures necessary for effectively administering activities funded through the Plan;
18) Establish and maintain a “Grievance Procedure” for programs and activities funded through the Plan.
19) Maintain local information in the Statewide Georgia Workforce System (GWS) Management and Information System.
20) Assume all other duties and responsibilities as may be required in accordance with the Workforce Investment Act, the State of Georgia, the Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Investment Board, and/or the Chief Elected Official.

The Columbus Consolidated Government has further delegated primary responsibility for the functions specified above, in accordance with the provisions of WIA and all other policies and procedures established to the Director, Job Training Division, who reports directly to the Deputy City Manager and City Manager, Columbus Consolidated Government.

Reporting to the Director, Job Training Division, is an Assistant Director, and a team of program specialists who assist with the planning, creation, and administration of dislocated worker, adult, and youth programs, services and activities; development of one-stop system operations and performance, oversight and compliance monitoring, and services and interagency coordination for the local workforce area. Under the program specialists are staff assigned to assist with intake, testing, case management, enrollment, data entry and oversight of services to youth, adult and dislocated workers. Also part of the WIA staff is a management information supervisor and administrative support clerk with responsibility for eligibility, data validation, and other performance responsibilities. Lastly, staff includes a finance manager and fiscal clerk responsible for coordination with the Columbus Consolidated Government’s Contracts and Grants Specialist and the Georgia Department of Labor to ensure transparency and accountability of all WIA funds, fiscal oversight of contract awards, and compliance with auditing requirements of the WIA.

3. Describe the connection and cross-membership between the Youth Council and the local Workforce Investment Board. List the responsibilities the local Board has vested in the Youth Council.

As a subpart of the Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Investment Board, the Youth Council is comprised of a cross section of individuals from the local area with expertise in services to the youth population; and includes four members from the local workforce who possess expertise in youth services.

As vested by the local Workforce Investment Board, the Youth Council is responsible for identifying the service needs of youth in the local area and to coordinate such services to youth in the local area; to determine the funding
availability of such services (e.g. WIA and non-WIA); and, to review and recommend approval/disapproval of solicitations for rendering such services; and, present such recommendation(s) to the local board for approval/disapproval; or, present recommendations to the Executive Committee, if necessary.

It is further the responsibility of the Youth Council to coordinate with the Administrator in the development of portions of the local plan related to youth in the area; to assist the Administrator in developing policy and procedures governing administration and implementation of youth services in the local area; and to make summary reports to the Executive Committee, and/or Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Board.

The Youth Council oversees the establishment of community-wide youth strategies and assists the Administrator with the coordination of program services that leverage funds to provide youth with the appropriate services while seeking to eliminate overlap and duplication. Additionally, the Youth Council recommends the type and mix of youth services and the selection of youth providers based upon competitive requests for proposals.

4. Describe any linkages the area has established with other local boards in the region (workforce boards and related boards).

Workforce Area Fourteen (WIA-14) continues to have strong linkages with the Family Connection Programs, Housing Authority, Enrichment Services Program, each county’s Health and Human Services Offices (DHHS), the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Human Resources. Other linkages include the Regional Advisory Council, the Regional Transportation Board, the Interagency Council, Georgia Workforce Leadership Association, Chamber of Commerce and the Columbus Consolidated Government Crime Prevention Division, Goodwill Industries, Department of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, in addition to the Middle Flint Workforce Investment Board. At the State level, there is also linkage with the Department of Community Affairs.

During the FY2007 strategic planning process, the local workforce area’s linkage with the Regional Advisory Council and the Middle Flint Workforce Investment Board had just begun to strengthen. However, as a result of the recent mergence of these agencies with the Regional Planning Board, the strength of the area’s linkage with these agencies has dissipated over time. Future efforts of the local area will continue to be explored to revitalize and improve the linkage between the workforce boards.

III. Plan Development and Implementation

Describe the process used by the area staff and board to update this strategic plan. Describe your strategic planning efforts and explain how the WIA Plan update
incorporates the results of these efforts. Incorporate in the discussion local
efforts for building a demand driven workforce within a regional economic
system from ETA’s National Strategic Directions (TEGL 13-06).

The collaborative efforts and expertise of education, workforce, business and
economic development partners in the local area have worked as harmonious
partners with the Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Board and WIA Staff in
updating this strategic plan.

Actions of the local board members and workforce staff has involved in-depth
and ongoing discussions with a broad spectrum of strategic partners in
assessing the talent development needs of the local area, formulating a
comprehensive analysis of the workforce supply and demand needs of the area,
and creating strategic strategies that would create a demand driven workforce
within the Region. This process included, but has not been limited to:

- **Workforce Assessment** – A comparison of future workforce supply to the
demand based upon current conditions and growth was used to estimate the
local area’s future labor force size; however, the methodology used did not
account for significant changes to the regional economy. An assessment of
the area’s most recent needs assessment study; the compilation of current
data supplied by various agencies, in addition to the wealth of knowledge
from the strategic partners was also utilized as part of the plan development
process.

- **Economic Impact Analysis** – Conducting an economic impact analysis of
the local area involved the utilization of the 2007 Market Street Services
study, the compilation of current data from the US Bureau of Labor
Statistics, the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, and data collected from
other federal and state government databases.

- **Program and Gap Analysis** – A SWOT analysis, which outlined current
workforce strengths and weaknesses in addition to an examination of
current workforce, education, and training programs and their capacity to
meet the future needs of our Region and local area was also used. Further
analysis of the local economic conditions continues to be observed to
determine the impact, if any, significant changes have had on the strengths
and weakness of the workforce and to identify the current capacity of the
workforce to address any surfaced concerns.

- **Recommendations** – Strategies to address gaps and identified issues, such as
education, training, and coordination of services that have been identified.
Short and mid-term action steps were also identified as recommended
methodologies for implementation.

Additionally, since WIA implementation, the Lower Chattahoochee Workforce
Board and the Administrative Entity continue to establish policies and
procedures based upon essential components of this plan.

The “Needs Assessment” portion of this Plan Update discusses the results of the local area’s strategic planning efforts in constructing this document. The local workforce board and Administrator continue to work diligently with local partners to address issues that are identified as weaknesses in this Strategic Plan and to discover ways to enhance those areas that are identified as the local area’s strengths.

Public notice of the availability of this Plan update will be published in the local area’s newspapers for public review and comment. The public notice will identify the sites at which the Plan is available for review. After the comment review period, all comments will be reviewed for possible inclusion into the Plan and will be submitted to the State.

IV. Needs Assessment

Using the CD containing the most recent labor market information for your area and the results of your strategic planning activities, please describe the demand (current and projected employment and skill needs of businesses) and supply (availability of skilled workers) aspects of your local labor market. List data sources used in your analysis. Review ETA’s National Strategic Directions (TEGL 13-06) and incorporate as appropriate.

NOTE: DT3: Customized LMI Planning Data for Local WIA Areas CDs, developed by GDOL Workforce Information and Analysis, were distributed during the last planning cycle.

Over the past several years, the economic outlook of the region has caused significant changes to occur in the Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Area. Plagued with downsizing, outsourcing, and closure of several major manufacturing and textile plants in the area have presented many unexpected challenges. As our local area continue to undergo transformation from a manufacturing and textile driven to service-oriented region in response to globalization, the advent of innovation and technology have also resulted in changes in the skill needs of businesses and industry in the local area.

As we continue to address the needs of this local area, moving forward it would be remiss not to recognize the tremendous impact current recessionary concerns have had on job growth and unemployment in the area. Additional challenges lie ahead as we analyze the supply and demand aspects of our local labor market and determine the appropriate training needs that will be required for jobseekers to become competitive and self-sufficient.

Although, these external factors have caused a significant blow to our current employment outlook, the Lower Chattahoochee Workforce area anticipates
expanded growth opportunities over the next two years as major businesses and the final expansion phase of Fort Benning, Georgia begin to settle in this area. However, the anticipated growth for this area is expected to present major challenges but also unusual opportunities.

As part of past strategic planning efforts, a workforce assessment, in addition to a program and gap analysis of our region was conducted to determine whether current workforce programs could support the future needs of our area. The use of this historical data and current assessments have been utilized as part of the continual development of the local area plan to better understand future supply and demand, and to provide strategies to address gaps and identified issues as we prepare for the increased growth in population and workforce demands that are anticipated.

Utilizing the results of the historical data and current labor market data, the gap analysis of our region was conducted to identify any significant changes that may have occurred over the past three years and whether additional areas should be considered in assessing the supply and demand needs of our local area. Additionally, this analysis was utilized to determine whether there exist any additional issues that needed to be considered in preparing for the potential growth expectancy.

The Local Workforce Board anticipates exploring other effective methodologies, to include the potential future procurement of another consultant in efforts to maintain a more updated and in-depth outlook of the current and future needs of the local labor force; in addition to, ensuring ongoing assessment and the continual updating of local strategies that are necessary to meet anticipated workforce demands and needs of the local communities.

- **Workforce Profile**
  Reflecting upon the FY 2007 study conducted by Market Street Services, it was noted that between the year 2000 and 2006, there was a slight decline in population and labor force trends that had occurred in the Region during this period. Six out of eleven counties in the Region had experienced population declines and five out of the eleven experienced declines in its labor force. The analysis conducted during this period had anticipated a projected increase of workers that had begun in the latter half of 2006, but would be expected to extend beyond 2010 as the KIA Automotive Plant in Harris County and the final expansion phase of the Base Realignment at Fort Benning, Georgia began to settle in this area. The total growth size of the region’s labor force was expected to grow by 1.3% during the period.

Utilizing various data sources from the area’s most recent labor market information, and information provided during strategic planning activities performed over the past two years, this plan depicts the following synopsis of
current and projected supply (employment and skill needs of businesses) and demand (availability of skilled workers) in the local labor market.

- **Population Growth Statistics**

A comparative analysis of the population growth over the last 10-year period indicates only a 2.1% growth, which exceeds the anticipated rate of growth forecast in the FY2007 study. According to the US Census Bureau Estimates, in 1998 the population growth in the Lower Chattahoochee workforce area was estimated at 249,081. In 2006, the population growth in this area grew to 257,720. In 2007, however, the area began to experience a slow regression of the population growth, dropping to 254,095. This slight fluctuation in population growth in this area during this period is attributable to the continued decline of the area’s major manufacturing and textile. However, with the anticipated expansion of the Fort Benning military installation and emergence of new industry, such as the KIA Automotive plant, during this period, it was projected that visible growth in population would ramp up by 2009 through 2011. In 2008, the local area began to experience a shift in the population growth, showing a slight increase to 254,360. In 2010, the population growth for this area has increased to 262,290 with continued growth expected.

- **Labor force, employment and unemployment statistics**

Preliminary data provided by the Georgia Department of Labor Workforce Information & Analysis, local area Unemployment Statistics depicts the following current labor force, employment and unemployment statistics for the Lower Chattahoochee Workforce area as of September 2010.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Civilian Labor Force</th>
<th>Number Employed</th>
<th>Number of Unemployed</th>
<th>Unemployment Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>114,738</td>
<td>103,942</td>
<td>10,796</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2009, according to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Georgia Department of Labor Area Labor Profile, the total number of estimated employees in the labor force located in Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Investment Area was 115,189. In 2010, the number of estimated employees was at 114,738; which directly correlate with the impact of a slow decline in the area’s labor market as it experienced a transitional movement from a manufacturing to service-oriented climate; in addition to, the impact of the unexpected recession and population growth during this period.

As depicted in the graph above, the total civilian labor force in Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Investment Area as of September 2010 was 114,738 of which 103,942 were employed compared to 104,942 in 2009. The
number of persons unemployed were 10,796 compared to 10,247 in 2009. In September 2010, the unemployment rate was 9.4%, with current rate escalating to 10.2% in the recent months of PY11. This increase in unemployment is partly attributable to the continued closure and outsourcing of many of this area’s major manufacturing plants, in addition to the economic impact of the current recession and business uncertainties to hire and/or retain workers.

According to data provided by the Georgia Department of Labor, the current industry outlook for our Region covering the period 2008 through 2018 shows a continual shift from manufacturing to the service sector. The Long term Industry Projections for the Lower Chattahoochee area depicts that four of the largest percent changes in employment that will continue to occur between 2008 to 2018 are in Personal and Laundry Service Industries at 31.46%, Textile Mills at 42.08%, Machinery Manufacturing at 39.07%, and Printing and Related Support Activities at 47.14%, respectively.

The largest percent change in employment, however, during this period will be in Social Assistance with a 50.63% change in employment or 4.18% growth annually, Nursing and Residential Care Facilities with a 44.62% change in employment, or 3.76% growth annually, and Accommodations, with a 28.29% change in employment, or 2.52% growth rate annually.

Educational services, Religious, grant making, Civic Professional and Simile; to include, and ambulatory health care services show increases of 1.85%, 1.97%, 1.997%, and 1.74% respectively. These projections continue to reinforce the shift from a manufacturing based to a services based economy.

One interesting note to be considered is that healthcare continues to be an increased demand occupation in our area; however, although a shift in post secondary enrollments in this field has shown significant increase over the past two years, data shows a disconnect in the number of graduates and employment statistics.

As earlier noted in this report, the Columbus region is on the cusp of a major influx of people and investments, directly resulting in the most part from the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process. Additionally, other major business investments that have reached fruition in the local area have had some impact on employment in the region. These include such investments as the major automotive manufacturing plant KIA that was constructed just north of WIA Area 14, with the first car rolling off the assembly line in 2009, NCR, the projected expansion of AFLAC, and the recent merger of Columbus Regional all have had some impact on employment in the region. Currently, several contracts have been awarded by the Army to design and build a new hospital on Fort Benning by 2013,
and to construct outdated housing and update the base infrastructure.

These initiatives and related population growth, in addition to the other non-military related business investments will have a major effect on the local economy. Many jobs will be created to serve households and the increased military and non-related activity.

- **Job Creation Summary**

  The Congressional Research Service in its report to members and committees of Congress in 2009 reports that Fort Benning, Georgia is forecast to gain nearly 14,000 jobs that will be needed to be filled by the region’s workforce. By 2011, contractor and civilian jobs, economic impact jobs, and public schools will combine to create an additional 10,400 jobs.

  It is recognized that workforce development is one area that continues to require special attention to ensure that the region is able to maximize this growth opportunity and ensure that there are enough qualified workers to fill the new jobs.

- **Workforce Assessment**

  During the strategic planning process, it has been duly noted that as a result of the projected influx of various business investments and the impact on the population growth in this area, particularly in its relationship with the Fort Benning expansion, job demand (in terms of what is needed to be filled by the regional workforce) will come from three primary sources:

  a) Contractor and civilian jobs that are not filled by those relocating as a result of the base realignment;
  b) Economic impact of population growth and activity (i.e. “ripple effect” through the regional economy) resulting from final phase of the base realignment;
  c) Public school demand as a result of the large increase in school-age children.

  According to the study, just in respect to the Fort Benning expansion alone, it is the expectation that approximately 40% of the increase in contractor positions and 80% of the increase in civilian positions will need to be filled by the workforce in the Columbus region. This translates to 1,400 contractor jobs and 1,652 civilian jobs to be filled regionally.

  The effects of the impacts will be significant not only in Area 14, but the region as a whole. These major events could severely alter the existing occupational and industrial projections provided by the Georgia Department of Labor. These major events will require that all partners continue to strengthen their collaborations to gather and analyze a wide array of current
and real-time workforce and economic data in order to have knowledge of the needs of the region to compete in a global economy and how these needs can be met effectively.

- **Key Workforce Development Concerns**

  The analysis conducted by the local area indicates that the local area is facing three key workforce issues as it prepares for economic and population growth.

  - **Improving K-12 preparation and quality** – Too many high school graduates are not adequately prepared for higher education or the working world. While the Chamber is engaging the business community in K-12 education, it is very difficult for any one group to make progress on systemic issues within K-12.

  - **Addressing work-readiness of current workforce** – Employers are very concerned with the lack of basic skills and work ethic/soft skills (including communication and interpersonal). While the higher education institutions and workforce partners are all involved, making progress will require the motivation and commitment of workers and for related social service issues to be addressed.

  - **Recruitment of skilled workers** – with the current projection of significant job growth expected as result of the continued expansion of Fort Benning, in addition to, current and projected flux of other major investments, the Columbus region will need to look externally to help ill needed positions. Local employers stated that it is difficult to attract professionals with four-year degrees to move to the region, particularly if they are young professionals. The local chamber has organized a new young professionals networking group. At the same time, addressing broader quality of life issues will be important to attracting a strong workforce.

  - An important topic that appears to continually resurface is the lack of soft skills possessed by the region’s adult and youth population. Although distinctions during planning discussions were made between employability skills (technical know-how) and soft skills (e.g. punctuality, loyalty, work ethics), there is little questioning that both are important pre-requisites that are lacking among much of the region’s workforce.

Based on the numbers alone, such a deficit of workers to fill the jobs that will be created, the region will need nearly 4,700 additional workers to meet the expected job demand. This however, does not include workforce demands related to other economic impacts of the region. The issue of skills and qualifications will further exacerbate the workforce shortage. Although the
Local workforce area enjoys a great collaboration with the region’s colleges and universities that provide a breadth of programs for most job growth areas, the need to improve the quality of high school graduates and the work-readiness of the current and future workforce are still major issues.

Short and mid-term action steps have been presented to address the current workforce concerns as well as prepare for future needs that include:

- Continued exploration of more specific and updated information about the types of jobs (particularly civilian and contractor) that will be relocating to the general area resulting from the projected completion of the expansion phase at the Fort Benning military installation. This will consist require:
  - Identifying the numbers of each position, timing of arrival, skill and education requirements, and other job requirements (e.g. security clearances) that should be gathered.
  - Follow-up of the economic impact analysis as needed to get new job impact numbers.

- Continued assessment of education and skill levels and job categories of projected population.

- Strategies to address the Region’s workforce-related challenges, such as basic literacy skills, customer service skills, work ethic, and troubleshooting skills, particularly hands-on, technical experience.

- Conduct surveys as needed to better understand the types of jobs, qualifications, and to what extent job seekers plan to work.

- Identify and prepare for infrastructure needs in education and health care services.

- Determine facilities and capital improvement needs to serve a significantly larger population.

1) Recruitment

Prepare for a major workforce initiative, which includes identifying priority job creation and workforce shortages. These are likely to include: teachers and education-related positions, healthcare, management-level positions, certain types of engineers, and computer scientists.

2) Work Readiness

a. Launch communication campaigns to reach different target audiences about job opportunities, to include information about career pathways opportunities, and local higher education institutions that offer related
degree programs. Include a series of presentations in neighborhoods, churches, and other gathering places.

b. Expand use of the Georgia Work Ready program in the Columbus Region to ensure more workers attaining Georgia Work Ready Certification and employers are.

i. Coordinate efforts to get high school and college graduates work ready certified, and work with major businesses to encourage their employees to become certified.

During the last several months, employee training has been conducted at CTC, Pratt & Whitney and Johnson Controls at no cost to employees or employers as part of the Work Ready Grant. Courses will continue to be offered while grant funds are still available and our industry partners are able to release employees to attend. The basic understanding is: For the offerings to be no-cost to employees and employers, attendees must take the Work Ready Assessment as part of the course work or in conjunction with the course work. Attendees with a Work Ready certificate will be exempt from this requirement. This can be a tremendous cost savings for our Industry partners and everyone should seriously consider sending employees to these training offers.

Muscogee County is still short 365 Private Sector certificates (as of the end of May, 2011). Pairing the Work Ready Assessment with the free training courses has helped to reduce this number but not at a rate to enable the local area to reach its goal by the end of September 2011.

Challenges we still face to complete the goals of the Region becoming Work Ready Certified center around high schools reaching and maintaining graduation rates and being able to have the Industry Network be sustainable for the future.

c. Increase opportunities for high school and college students to acquire work experience through summer and school-year internships, primarily for college students. To increase access to services and opportunities that result in increase in graduation rates and entry into institutions of higher learning or employment in high growth, high-demand occupations.

d. Work with region non-profit organizations, government entities and businesses to identify volunteer and internship opportunities for high school students.
e. Continue to evaluate the additional education and training programs needed to prepare the workforce for projected positions.

f. Continue to collaborate with stakeholders to develop continual strategies to meet the goal of becoming a Work Ready Certified Region.

3) Other

Other areas that remain a continued concern that must be considered during further strategic planning include:

a) Basic Skills:

For the Region to become more competitive and attract those industries that are growing in the current economy, it is imperative that workers have the basic skills required in order to be further trained to meet the demands of higher skilled positions. A quality high school education is perhaps the most important factor for the success and performance of the workforce. Three issues identified for improvement – basic skills, foundational work skills, and work ethics will rely heavily on the assistance and resources of schools to address them. A further look at the transitional strategies of our high schools is necessary to lay the foundation for the future workforces to either immediately enter the workforce or post-secondary education.

b) Support Services

“Support services are services that workers need in order to be able to have a job. Two services that are not readily available in the Region, especially in the rural areas, are childcare and transportation. Even in the more urban area of Columbus and Muscogee County, the problem of quality childcare and transportation is unavailable to parents who work non-traditional shifts and is often unaffordable to shift workers with low wages. In addition, many of the better childcare facilities have long waiting lists; and, the hours of operation for major transit is not conducive for workers performing jobs with non-traditional shifts.

c) Poor Work Ethic

“Work ethic” is a somewhat subjective term, and is defined differently depending on a person’s perspective. However, some very basic elements can be used to define a good work ethic for Region 8 employers: “good attendance, taking responsibility for the service and/or product, and putting in a full day’s work”. These are all characteristics that all of the Region’s employers would like see in their employees. Although this issue may be tied to work readiness, work ethics must be considered a separate issue that should be addressed on its own.”
Workforce and economic development groups must work together to ensure that a skilled and adequate workforce is in place to fill the jobs that will be created in the local area. Although only a few of the recommendations were presented in this plan, the local area must ensure that action is taken to implement and refine the recommendations that were presented during the strategic planning process as pertinent information becomes available. The end results of these efforts will be an improved workforce as one of the Columbus region’s key assets.

V. Workforce Delivery System

1. Using the matrix in Attachment A, outline the structure of the area's One-Stop system, identifying partners at each comprehensive site and the major services provided at those locations. Provide the same basic information about additional workforce service locations in the local area, i.e., locations that are not considered comprehensive One-Stops. Describe enhanced integration through the One-Stop system to improve service delivery and increase efficiency as discussed in ETA’s National Strategic Directions (TEGL 13-06) as appropriate.

Attachment A outlines the structure of the Lower Chattahoochee One-Stop system, identifies the varied partners at each comprehensive and itinerate site locations, and provides a list of major services offered at the various locations in an effort of the local workforce area to promote greater integration of information and delivery of service, and increase efficiencies of the workforce system that would ultimately improve system results and promote quality customer service.

2. Describe methods of coordinating with partners and services not available at the comprehensive sites, including the HOPE NOW Alliance to maximize homeownership and prevent unnecessary foreclosures, and public libraries aimed at improving the quality and quantity of employment and training services for job seekers. (TEN 30-09, TEN 50-09)

*The comprehensive one-stop site offers the ease of customer accessibility through containment of various mandated partners and services in a one-stop environment. Collaborative strategies to strengthen the methods of coordinating with partners and services not available at the comprehensive site are accomplished through the institution of ongoing one-stop forums held at the comprehensive center that promote involvement of internal and external agencies and staff from both governmental and non-governmental source. This collaboration has enabled enhancement of information sharing and cultivation of resources needed to facilitate a seamless service delivery system rather than an array of separate programs with separate processes; to enhance quality customer support and to build a plausible foundation for customer successes. These forums involve mandated one-stop partners, in addition to a host of for profit, non-profit, and community based organizations and/or providers not
located at the comprehensive site that offer supportive services and training to customers in our community.

A representative from each partnering agency facilitates a service building session at each forum, which provides knowledge of respective services and eligibility requirements available to customers of the workforce system. Brochures, fact sheets, PowerPoint presentations and interactive modules, are part of these forums. Other methods include coordination, with other agencies via telephone, facsimile, e-mail, et cetera.

A directory of services is produced and published each program year that include both WIA and non-WIA agencies conducting business in the workforce area. This directory is used by partners of the one-stop workforce system as a resource guide for the coordination of services provided to individuals seeking assistance through the workforce development system, to enhance professional knowledge of programs and services available that may assist in the elimination barriers to employment and promote self-sufficiency.

The Administrator realizes that there is a continual need to discover and promote better ways to serve the customer and to provide quality services to the customers seeking services in our one-stop environment. Expanding the knowledge of our partners and promoting camaraderie among agencies will continue to be the ongoing strategy to unify the workforce system and agency resources that serve to eliminate obstacles for individuals who face “unprecedented challenges to retool their skills and to reestablish themselves in viable career paths”.

Collaboration with the Hope Now Alliance is ongoing. The Columbus Consolidated Government in alliance with other representatives from his initiative will be invited to become part of our quarterly meetings to ensure all partners are aware of this service as a referral source for customers who may be unable to pay their mortgages. A member of the local housing authority is an active member of our board and youth council.

3. If your comprehensive sites are not GDOL career centers, describe how services at the area's site(s) and GDOL services are integrated to provide seamless customer service.

The Lower Chattahoochee Area’s comprehensive site is operated through the local GDOL career center; however, itinerate sites are also established in various locations throughout the workforce area as resource centers and information networks to aid customers unable to access information or services provided at the comprehensive site. Attachment “A” briefly describes the partners and services offered in the itinerate locations.

4. Summarize the functions performed by the area's One-Stop operator(s).
The Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Investment Board accepted the concept of a one-stop workforce development system being formulated by a consortium of the following agencies: The Columbus Consolidated Government, Georgia Department of Labor, Division of Rehabilitation Services, Columbus Technical College, and the Muscogee County School District. With this acceptance, the Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Investment Board also acknowledged that the one-stop operator for the Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Investment Area would be the Columbus Consolidated Government. The Columbus Consolidated Government, further designated the Job Training Division, all responsibilities promulgated under the federal statute to ensure appropriate coordination, planning and administration of programs, activities and services, and governance of a workforce development system that best meet the spirit of the law and fulfill its role in conceptualizing an educated and prepared workforce able to compete in local and global economy.

As the One-stop Operator, the Columbus Consolidated Government is responsible for:

- Coordinating the provision of services according to the One-stop System Memorandum of Understanding;
- Prepare and maintain a system operational procedure in conjunction with all partners;
- Ensure that the system operates according to applicable laws and regulations and the local board policy;
- Oversee the collection and analysis of customer satisfaction data; and, Make recommendations to the local board for possible adjustments and/or changes.

5. Indicate which partners are providing core and intensive services for adults and dislocated workers in your area.

A list of partners located in the comprehensive one-stop center include: Georgia Department of Labor, Muscogee County Department of Family & Children Services, Georgia Department of Labor Rehabilitation Services, Columbus Technical College, Columbus Consolidated Government, Muscogee County School Board, Columbus Housing Authority, Enrichment Services Program, Experience Works, and Job Corps.

Core and Intensive services provided for adults and dislocated workers are comprised of the following services and the agencies that provide these services:

**Core Services**
- Outreach, intake, and information regarding available services in the local workforce area;
• Initial assessment of skills, aptitude, abilities and supportive services;
• Job search and placement assistance, including career counseling (required)
• Provision of employment data and labor market information; Local, regional and national employment trends;
• Information on job skills necessary to obtain jobs in the labor market
• Information relating to available services, and the availability of support services such as childcare and transportation available in the local area, and referral to such, as appropriate
• Employment referral; (required for jobseekers under WIA)
• Provision of information regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation;
• Assistance in determining eligibility for other training activities, programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs not funded under WIA, that are available in the local area; and
• Follow-up services for customers attaining employment for not less than 12 months after first known date of employment.

The Career Center provides one or more of these services to customers that enter the one-stop system; however, it is not required that a customer be provided all of the above services. Each individual should be assessed based on individual needs.

Intensive Services:
Intensive Services may be provided by all partners in the one-stop and provided to all customers of the local workforce area that require significant assistance, and is specifically designed for services provided to adults and dislocated workers who:

- are unemployed and have been unable to obtain employment through core services,
- are determined by a one-stop representative to be in need of more intensive services or intervention in order to obtain employment, or
- are employed, but have been determined by a one-stop representative to be in need of intensive services in order to obtain or retain employment that allows for self-sufficiency.

Services made available during this level of service may include, but are not limited to:

• Jobs search, placement, and training targeting particular labor market needs;
• Jobs search, placement, and training targeting particular groups or populations;
• Comprehensive and specialized assessment of skill level and service needs such as diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools; and;
• In-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals;
• Development of an individual employment plan to identify employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve employment goals;
• Group or individual counseling and career planning;
• Case management for customers seeking employment or training;
• Short-term prevocational skills, including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training;
• Value added services such as referral to childcare, transportation, individual and family counseling, temporary or emergency shelter, or other services pertinent to the local area;
• Determinations of appropriate youth services are also conducted during services during this level of service.

Partners of the workforce development system may provide one or more of the intensive services outlined. Additionally, the Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Area has incorporated work experience activities, usually designed for older and younger youth, that are accessible during intensive training to adults and dislocated workers as well, in an ongoing effort to meet the skill needs of existing or regional employers, to fill high growth and demand occupations, and to create a seamless career pathways for customers to advance and persist through progressive levels of the system as quickly as possible to gain workforce skills of demonstrated value, in addition to meeting the needs of unskilled adults.

Other Services:

Additionally, free access to computers, software programs, printers, fax, local telephone lines, and the Internet is offered at no cost to the public. A business center is also available in the Columbus Career Center for employers’, which consists of private offices for interviewing purposes, and includes telephones, computers, printers, copier, and fax accessibility.

6. Provide a current sample Memorandum of Understanding/Resource Sharing Agreement from one of your comprehensive One-Stops as Attachment B. Signatures are not required for submittal, but current agreements with signatures must be available for review upon request and during annual onsite program reviews.
A sample of the local Memorandum of Understanding/Resource Sharing Agreement for our comprehensive one-stop center is attached to this plan at Attachment B.

7. List the board-established policies regarding:

   a. priority of service for adult intensive and training services, where adult funds are determined to be limited

   **Priority of service for intensive and training services, where adult funds are determined to be limited (WIA), and priority of service for intensive and training services for adults will be given to individuals who have at a minimum met minimum eligibility requirements, but have one or more characteristics that act as barriers to employment or other factors that may limit an individual’s ability to seek, find, and maintain employment. These characteristics include:**

   - Underemployed or unemployed
   - Offender
   - Food stamp or TANF recipient
   - Poor employability skills
   - Poor work history
   - Poor basic skill
   - Lacks self-sufficiency
   - Disabled
   - Older Worker
   - Dislocated worker

   **Priority of service to veterans would work as shown in the following example:**

   ➢ **For the Adult and Dislocated Worker Program**

   Dislocated workers who are veterans will receive priority over non-veterans. Veterans who are not dislocated workers cannot be served with dislocated worker fund. In the WIA adult and dislocated worker program, first priority for intensive and training services must be given to public assistance recipients and low-income individuals when adult funds allocated to a local area are limited. In regards to veterans, the priority of provision of services would be as follows: First to be served would be public assistance recipients and low-income individuals who are also veterans. The second group to be served would be public assistance recipients and low-income non-veterans. Among participants who are not public assistance recipients or low-income individuals, veterans would receive priority over non-veterans.
Adult persons eligible to receive intensive and training services using Workforce Investment Act funds must meet the following guidelines; reside within the eight County Lower Chattahoochee Service Areas and have been determined eligible based on the income guidelines provided.

The income levels shown in the table below will apply to WIA eligibility and reporting in federal program years 2011-2012, or until another update occurs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Size</th>
<th>Metropolitan Areas</th>
<th>Non-Metropolitan Areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$5,445</td>
<td>$5,445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$7,355</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>$20,882</td>
<td>$20,418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For each, over 8 Add:</td>
<td>$2,347</td>
<td>$2,294</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Metropolitan Area includes: Chattahoochee, Harris, and Muscogee Counties. Non-Metropolitan Area includes: Talbot, Stewart, Randolph, Clay, and Quitman counties.

The Local Board, in order, to increase the number of adult customers served, adopted the relaxing the WIA Income eligibility guidelines for adults. The maximum income limit for which eligibility is determined based was increased to $50,000 and is based on total family income.

b. service to individuals who do not reside in the area

While informational/self-help core services are available to all customers, no WIA funded intensive, training, and supportive services will be provided to adults and youth who do not reside in the Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Area. Adult and youth residents of other workforce areas will be referred to them for intensive and/or training services.

Customers identified as dislocated workers, whose place of dislocation of employment is/was located within the Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Area will receive priority of service for WIA funded, intensive, training, and supportive services.
c. target groups served in the area

Priority will be given to adult and/or youth recipients of public assistance, low-income individuals, and other individuals meeting minimum eligibility requirements. Other individuals include those who have one or more of the characteristics listed below that may act as barriers to obtaining and/or maintaining employment:

- Unemployed
- Under employed
- Lacks a high school diploma or GED
- Poor work history
- Poor basic skills
- Lacks self-sufficiency
- Limited English Proficiency
- Disabled

d. supportive service policies, including needs-related payments, for adults, dislocated workers, and youth.

The following supportive service policy shall apply to any customer determined eligible for, approved for, and assigned to WIA funded classroom training.

- Participants shall be paid at the rate of $10 per day of attendance.
  - To continue receiving supportive services, the participant must maintain a “full-time status” with the school they are attending, and:
  - The participant must attend a minimum of 80% of each scheduled class, and:
  - The participant must maintain at least a “C” average in each class scheduled, and:
  - Falsification of attendance forms may result in being terminated from WIA funded services and could result in repayment of all funds expended as a result of such falsification.

No needs-related payments are authorized; however, approval of supportive service beyond the allowable supportive services identified above while participating in WIA funded classroom-training activities must be obtained from the Director, Job Training Division.

Approval of supportive services for those participants not attending WIA funded classroom-training activities, but participating in other WIA funded activities, must be obtained from the Director, Job Training Division.

e. demand occupations (please list)
The following are demand occupations that are identified for the Lower Chattahoochee Workforce area.

✓ Food preparation and serving related occupations
✓ Office and Administrative Support
✓ Sales and related occupations
✓ Education, training, and Library occupations
✓ Transportation and Material Moving occupations
✓ Healthcare Practitioners and Technical occupations
✓ Management occupations
✓ Production occupations
✓ Personal Care and Service occupations
✓ Construction and Extraction occupations
✓ Protective Service occupations
✓ Computer and mathematical occupations
✓ Community and Social Services occupations
✓ Child Care Workers
✓ Legal occupations
✓ Installation, Maintenance and Repair occupations
✓ Architecture and engineering occupations
✓ Business and financial operations occupations
✓ Commercial Driving

8. Describe the local Individual Training Account (ITA) system, including:

a. public notification to prospective providers

*The local Administrator maintains a Bidder List that contains all prospective bidders who have requested to receive any and/or all solicitations for the provision of programs/services under WIA proposed by the local Board. An open solicitation is published in the local Area’s newspapers and further solicitations may be offered on an as needed basis.*

*Training provider applications will be reviewed and evaluated by Administrative Staff. The evaluation will include the evaluation of elements in the evaluation criteria, verification of performance information, etc. The comparison of local criteria will include evaluation of state performance against local measures. Letters will be forwarded to providers who fail to submit adequate information and applications may be reviewed upon submission of additional information.*

*The Administrator will prepare summary reports on evaluation of training provider applications and submit to the Program*
Evaluation/Selection Committee for approval and recommendation to
the LWIB. Eligible providers will be forwarded to GDOL for approval
and listing of eligible providers on the State Eligible Provider List. A
letter of notification will be provided to state-approved training
providers.

b) how the board evaluates providers and proposed training programs
for initial eligibility, based on (at a minimum) criteria of proven
effectiveness, local employer/industry demand, accreditation, and
customer accessibility

Training provider applications are reviewed and evaluated by
Administrative Staff. The evaluation includes the evaluation and
verification of elements in the evaluation criteria, verification of
performance information, etc. The comparison of local criteria will
include evaluation of state performance against local measures. Letters
will be forwarded to providers who fail to submit adequate information
and applications may be reviewed upon submission of additional
information. The Administrator will prepare a summary of training
provider applications and submit to the Program Evaluation/Selection
Committee for review, approval and recommendation to the LWIB.
Information on eligible providers will be forwarded to GDOL for
approval and listing of eligible providers on the State Eligible Provider
List, a letter of notification will be provided to state-approved training
providers.

c. formal appeals process for aggrieved ITA customers and providers
of unapproved training programs

The local workforce area has an established formal appeals process for
aggrieved ITA customers and providers of unapproved training
assistance or training program as set for in the local organizational
policies and procedures and individual training accounts manual.
Additionally, individuals and providers are provided a copy the local
grievance policy during the WIA intake process and providers are
provided copies as part of the Master Agreement between the local area
and the respective provider.

d. ongoing process used to update the data on the eligible provider
list (exclusive of the state-conducted annual subsequent eligibility
process)

The Administrator accepts and reviews eligible provider applications
throughout the year. Administrator reviews and evaluates applications
using the established process identified in the attached ITA Policy. Any
changes are presented to the LWIB for approval. Quarterly monitoring
of the eligible providers utilized by WIA participants in the local area is conducted to ensure that providers are meeting performance guidelines established.

e. any regional policies or agreements for ITAs or training providers

The local area has used ITA Master Agreements with a variety of educational programs offered by schools across Georgia and in Alabama. We continually welcome opportunities to establish ITA Master Agreements with occupational skills provider programs in demand.

f. access of customers to the eligible provider list and process for determining which customers receive ITAs

Customers accessing the one-stop system are informed of the full-array of programs and services that are available and are provided access to the State eligible provider list. ITAs are only available to eligible customers seeking occupational skills training; however, customers eligible for receipt of ITAs must first be determined, through receipt of core and intensive services, to be “in need training”. Additionally, a determination must be made that occupational skills/classroom type of training is the most suitable to the customer’s needs. Once the determination has been made that ‘classroom’ training is appropriate and a demand occupation has been agreed upon with the customer, the customer will access the eligible provider list to select a provider that provides training in the selected occupational area. Once this is completed, the customer must apply to the selected institution’s program of study. The letter of acceptance must be without conditions and not require provisional courses. Finally, the customer must demonstrate that they have applied for financial aid and/or demonstrate that they are not eligible for assistance prior to an ITA being issued for the customer. The local area has a pickup policy for customers already actively enrolled in occupational skills training who demonstrate need for WIA assistance. These individuals must meet specific criteria as outlined in the local area ITA policy.

g. process to track and manage all ITA activity

Case Managers are required to complete all paperwork and submit it to the Administrator, who reviews it and authorizes the ITA. Upon authorization, copies of the ITA are transmitted to the Case Manager, the School authorized to train the customer, and the WIA Administrator’s Finance office. Upon receipt of the approved ITA, the Case Manager will assign the Customers Service(s) in the GWS and copy of service assignment information transmitted to the Finance
Section for further processing in establishing the obligation. Once the school submits an invoice to the Finance Section, the Finance Staff will verify customer information in the GWS, and on the Support Services payment paperwork submitted by the Case Manager prior to the ITA Invoice being paid by the Administrator.

h. board policy on use of statewide eligible provider list (including financial and duration limits, demand occupations, out-of-area training, service to out-of-area customers, restrictions on use of statewide list, etc.)

The Board policy regarding the use of statewide eligible providers mandates use of the eligible provider list to ensure that the State of Georgia Department of Labor has appropriately reviewed all providers. The financial and durational limits that have been identified by the local area for completion of training is set at $3000 per year not to exceed $6,000 dollars and the duration shall not exceed 2 years without the Director Job training’s approval. All Individual Training Accounts’ (ITA)’s must be in demand occupations as identified for the local workforce area.

Customers seeking out-of-area training may attend such training, as long as the training is within commuting distance of the customer’s residence. Only dislocated worker customers whose place of dislocation is within the local Workforce Area 14 (Lower Chattahoochee Area) will be considered.

9. Describe local training policies that ensure that other funds (e.g., Pell, HOPE Grant or Scholarship, TANF, etc.) are considered in addition to WIA funds, consistent with TEN 11-09. What impact do you anticipate recent HOPE changes will have on the local system? Describe any coordinated efforts regarding training across areas within the region.

Local policy provides that the full cost of training is estimated and then all applicable financial grant assistance is applied against the proposed cost prior to determining the amount of WIA funds necessary, if any.

WIA staff, along with the Georgia Department of Labor, is participating in inter-state dislocated worker activities. We are training residents of Alabama who have been affected by layoffs in our region and Alabama. Local Area 14 will continue to coordinate services with entities and residents affected by layoffs and/or closures in our multi-state region.

10. Discuss the role of faith- and community-based providers within the local system. Discuss board policies regarding training contracts with community-based organizations or other training providers with proven
expertise in serving special populations with multiple barriers to employment. If the board has established any such contracts, list which populations are served through these contracts and list the criteria by which the area determines the proven effectiveness of such programs. See ETA’s National Strategic Directions (TEGL 13-06) encouraging effective utilization of faith-based and community based organizations and incorporate as appropriate.

Within our local workforce area, there area numerous faith and community-based organizations to provide a host of supportive services to citizens of our community have been viable referral sources for individuals served through our local workforce system. Through our local solicitation process, two community based organizations: Operation Meeting Essential Needs (OMEN); and Goodwill Industries of Southern Rivers, Inc, have been awarded WIA funding to operate a work-experience activity for younger and older youth. Goodwill Industries has proven expertise in serving individuals with disabilities and is in keeping the goal of our workforce area in ensuring that all citizens have equal opportunity to receive services despite multiple barriers to employment.

Additionally, the local area has strengthened its collaboration with Enrichment Services, a community-based organization, in promoting work experience opportunities for adults through their weatherization program (a green jobs initiative) for youth, adults and dislocated workers of the community.

As part of the local area’s criteria for determining the proven effectiveness of such programs, contracts identify specific performance goals expected of the providers in addition to quarterly programmatic, performance, compliance and fiscal monitoring to ensure transparency and accountability of funds.

As we move forward, the local area will continue to enhance its collaboration and linkage with the faith-based community and other community-based organizations in its efforts to broaden the scope of services that will be necessary to meet future workforce demands.

11. Describe the area's process and procedures for contracting with intensive service providers, support service providers, and other contractors for adults and dislocated worker services. If the area has no such contracts, simply write in "N/A."

In ongoing efforts to enhance services to the dislocated workers, the local area, through the normal competitive procurement process, contracted with an intensive service provider to provide work experience
for WIA eligible dislocated workers graduating from local post secondary and vocational schools, and placed in positions that provide work exposure in the field for which they received occupational classroom training, and that offer the potential for continued employment and retention leading to self-sufficiency.

12. Describe the area’s process and procedures for contracting with youth service providers. Describe the area's youth strategies, including how disconnected youth will be served. Discuss how the area's workforce system is addressing the ten local youth program elements described in the Workforce Investment Act, as well as the integration of other initiatives such as School-to-Work, Jobs for Georgia Graduates, Job Corps, summer work programs, and High School/High Tech. Describe the specific strategies the area is using to meet ETA’s New Strategic Vision for the Delivery of Youth Services under WIA (TEGL 28-05).

All youth Service Providers are secured through competitive procurement and the required ten program elements are made a part of each youth provider’s contract. Through the contractual agreement, each provider ensures that each of the ten program elements is available to participants either through the provision of services or appropriate linkages to services that are available through other agencies or partners within the local area.

13. If the area has chosen to use ITAs for older youth [per the state waiver under WIA Section 189(i)(4)(B)], please describe the criteria that will be used for determining appropriateness and how youth will be assisted in choosing appropriate service providers/programs. If the area does not plan to use the ITA option for older youth, please explain.

The Local Workforce Board has elected to use Individual Training Accounts (ITA)’s for Older Youth as prescribed in the following adopted policy:

Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) will be used for “Older Out-of School’ Youth if deemed appropriate and the following criteria are met:

A. The youth must meet the policy criteria specified in the ITA Policy and Procedures including demand occupations, length of training, applying for at a minimum, the PELL Grant and HOPE Scholarship/Grant, full acceptance into an occupation-specific program, funding limitations, etc.:

The youth must be enrolled in a WIA youth Program, and the youth’s case manager has determined through comprehensive counseling and case management the occupation skills training
through the ITA system is appropriate and necessary for the youth to find full-time employment in the field of his or her choice that leads to self-sufficiency.

B. The youth must have successfully completed all of their assigned WIA youth services prior to being deemed suitable/eligible for an older youth ITA.

C. The youth must have undergone extensive career counseling including career assessments to ensure he or she makes an informed choice.

D. The youth must be informed of:
   - The approved providers that offers training in his or her chosen career;
   - The program performance of the providers that offer such training; and,
   - The financial resources that will be required to and are available to assist in paying for the cost of the training.

E. The youth must develop a financial plan to determine that he of she has the resources available to complete the training program and seek employment.

F. All ten of the WIA required Youth Elements, as applicable, must be available to the youth throughout his or her program of study.

G. Career advisors and/or case managers must be available to assist youth in making the transition to post-secondary training and his or her career.

The Youth must receive a minimum of twelve months follow-up services upon completion of training.

14. Describe dislocated worker service strategies, including coordination with Registered Apprenticeship and state-level Rapid Response, GDOL career centers, and state/local Trade Act activities. Discuss how coordination will leverage all available services to maximize resources to ensure UI claimants return to the workforce. How do you expedite enrollment in training for dislocated workers so their UI benefits are likely to last throughout the training period?

The local system coordinates with the State Rapid Response Unit when layoffs or business closing occur. Local Area staff communicates and work closely with the State RRU in responding expeditiously to layoffs or closures. Staff provides pre-lay-off assistance to employers and their employees following notice of layoff but prior to actual job loss.

It is extremely important that dislocated workers be identified during
intake, regardless of the services they are requesting. Since the Trade Act provides for adjustment allowances (TRA) to individuals whose unemployment is linked to imports of foreign made products, dislocated workers will be assessed to determine their eligibility for TRA/TAA. When eligible for TRA/TAA, an enrollment can be done providing an opportunity for them to engage in long-term training/retraining while receiving cash payments and other re-employment benefits.

15. Describe how WIA and other funds available in the area are used to conduct outreach and recruitment for individuals in special populations, including veterans, individuals with disabilities, public assistance recipients, offenders, customers with limited English proficiency, and other groups. Discuss the local area’s services to older workers.

The Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Area in collaboration with various government and non-government entities have incorporated a marketing strategy to conduct outreach and recruitment of special population groups (e.g. veterans, migrant and seasonal farm workers, individuals with disabilities, public assistance recipients, offenders, customers with limited English proficiency, and other groups) via use of WIA and other funds available in the area. As part of its marketing strategy, distribution of informational brochures, speaking engagements, and attendance and participation in various collaborative agency efforts are the focal point of ensuring that all citizens are aware of and have access to the services provided under the workforce development system.

In addition, WIA funds will be utilized to provide intensive and training services to economically disadvantaged/dislocated residents of the local area, where applicable. The Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Area has maintained an ongoing inter-agency collaboration with the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and Goodwill Industries of Southern Rivers to provide transitional assistance through WIA funded work experience that assist out-of-school youth with disabilities gain the knowledge, skills, and experience they need to successfully transition into the world of work. Additionally, in coordination with the Georgia Department of Labor and Department of Family and Children Services, the Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Area’s ensures priority of services is provided to welfare recipients to obtain or prepare for employment.

The needs of veterans and recently separated veterans with military occupational specialties that are not readily transferable to the civilian workforce are case managed on a case-by-case basis. Services may include a combination of self-service and/or facilitated self-service activities depending on the individual’s needs. One-on-one intensive services are available to all individuals needing them through the Veterans
Unit of the local Career Center to ensure that the particular needs and priorities of the veteran are addressed. Should the need for retraining and/or retraining be determined the Veterans Unit will make the appropriate referral.

Dislocated workers, migrant and seasonal farm workers, TANF recipients, offenders, older workers, people with disabilities and individuals with barriers to employment will be assessed to ensure that the customer receives services at a level commensurate with their need. All customers will be encouraged and supported in their efforts to achieve a functioning level of self-sufficiency. All of the customer groups identified above will have varying degrees of needs that cannot necessarily be determined by their classification to one or the other specific customer groups. Informational orientations, triage-style assessment activities, referral services and other methods will be utilized to help direct customers to the level and type(s) of service(s) that will most efficiently and effectively respond to their expressed and/or identified needs.

Customers with limited English proficiency will be assisted where possible in their own language. Where it is not possible to assist the customer in their own language they will be referred to the Adult Education Center or other appropriate resources in their county of residence.

Older workers will be assessed to ensure that the customer receives appropriate services at a level commensurate with their needs. All customers will be encouraged and supported in their efforts to achieve a functioning level of self-sufficiency. To help ensure that this population group receives the level and type(s) of service(s) that will be most efficiently and effectively respond to their expressed and/or identified needs, referrals will be made to appropriate agencies such as Experience Works.

16. Discuss the area’s workforce services to businesses, and how business and organized labor representatives on the local Workforce Investment Board contributed to the development of these strategies. Provide a listing of business services available through the area’s One-Stop(s), such as planned employer workshops, tax credit assistance, and assessment and screening of potential employees. Additionally, identify your economic development partners and describe the involvement of your economic development community in developing strategies, particularly new economic development and business strategies, including those with a focus on small business, entrepreneurial and self-employment training. (TEGL 12-10)

Members of the local board include: (a) members of the local business
community that are also members of the local Department of Labor “Employer Committee”, (b) members of organized labor, and (c) a representative of a local economic development organization. Some of the local board members are also members of various Chambers of Commerce in the local area. All have taken an active part in the development of these plan strategies.

During development of this plan, members of the local board identified and accepted, at a minimum, the following list of business services that are available through the local One-Stop center.

Business services available to businesses at the comprehensive one-stop center include, the following: provision of employment statistics, access to economic development information, performance information and program services provided by eligible providers and other agencies that are available to assist local employers in their recruitment efforts for skilled and trained workers to fill job openings, access to talent banks, provision of labor law information, job auditing, testing, and other activities. A resource area is available at the center, equipped with technology and other resources to meet the employers for interviewing, conducting recruitment efforts, et cetera. Rapid response activities, employer committee seminars, job fairs, and proficiency skills testing services are also available. Provision of the above services through the Local Workforce System helps to ensure that employers have access to the best employees.

An active ‘Employer Committee’ formed by the local GDOL Career Center, has been ongoing for many years and is comprised of a group of business representatives whose diligent efforts in identifying the local needs of the business community has been instrumental in maintaining the strong working relationship experienced in this local area between the employer community and the One-Stop Center. Some members of the local workforce investment board are also active members on the employer committee. Members of this committee take active roles in promoting the various services available through the local one-stop centers among the employment community and continue to assist local agency partners identify and recommend ways to meet local and state employment related needs. The mission of the ‘Employer Committee’ is to enhance the employment related services provided by the One-Stop and to facilitate communication between the business communities of Georgia.

The local One-Stop center and its itinerate sites are fully prepared to market workforce services to businesses and job seekers. Employer/employee briefings resulting from mass layoffs and coordination with collaborative partners to provide mass recruitment/job
fairs and Quick Start services to new or expanding businesses in the area are other services offered at the local comprehensive one-stop center. Other examples of services offered to businesses through the One-Stop include:

- Knowledge about Unemployment Taxes and Benefits
- Tax filing and Wage Reports
- Assistance with petitions and layoff or business closure
- Partial unemployment insurance claims filing
- Information regarding employment law or employment issues
- Recruitment
- Tax credits and incentives
- Labor Market Information
- Local Workforce and business development resources
- Find Workforce Investment Act information for Employers

The Columbus One-Stop Career Center coordinates and sponsors three major job fairs each year to support employers in finding qualified job seekers. These Job Fairs make it possible for all employers in Area Fourteen to recruit talented job seekers for their vacant positions.

In addition to the annual job fairs, other smaller career expos and job specific fairs are hosted and supported by WIA and other local partners to assist area employers seeking to fill specific vacancies or colleges advertising their talented students to local employers or recruiting potential students. These have included:

- Columbus Technical College; Career Expo
- St. Francis Hospital; Career Expo
- Columbus State University; Career Expo
- University of Phoenix; Career Expo
- Quitman County Family Connections’; Engagement Day
- Andrews College; Career Expo

Also sponsored are mass recruitments for employers looking to fill immediate vacancies. These mass recruitments are held at the Columbus Career Center and the One-Stop staff provides the screening and assessments necessary to provide the employer with only those applicants that meet their requirements and are prepared to interview for the job.

The Columbus Career Center staff also schedules eligible applicants for interviews with the employer and makes the Business Center available for the employer to conduct those interviews.

Currently all partners do not provide all of the above services. However, through involvement of business, organized labor, and the economic
development community as the local workforce development system evolves, the availability of these and other services will be improved as the system becomes more fully integrated into a comprehensive workforce investment system.

17. The Local Government Services Delivery Act of 1997 defines ways in which jurisdictions will work together to reduce duplication by promoting coordinated service delivery. Discuss any regional service delivery strategies planned within your region. Examples of relevant strategies are: uniformity in eligible training providers, or uniformity in maximum allowable training and supportive service amounts.

Local areas continue to work toward developing a regional coordinated service strategy that will promote uniformity with eligible training providers, uniformity in maximum allowable training and supportive service amounts.

18. Discuss how the local area is using various fund sources to develop integrated service strategies for adult customers, especially for TANF, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and other low-income individuals, including the Georgia Fatherhood Program. (TEN 35-09)

Development of an integrated service strategy using various funding sources is being accomplished in the following manner:

The local Department of Labor, Career Center, utilizes Wagner-Peyser and other related Employment Service funding to provide many core services at the Career Center Comprehensive One-Stop site for all customers.

Although the local Career Center has effortlessly sought ways to conduct regularly scheduled registration and services to individuals residing in outlying counties, the availability of staff had limited its capability to provide sufficient access to services, especially to those in the rural counties of this workforce area. In efforts to strengthen the presence of our one-stop services and enhance the accessibility of GDOL and other services to residents residing in the rural counties, it is anticipated that recent procurement of a mobile assessment unit by the local WIA, will meet these challenges.

The Muscogee County Board of Education helps defray the cost of instructors and other personnel at sites within the local area by conducting basic skills training, remediation, and GED preparation. Currently, Columbus Technical College, Chamber of Commerce and the Columbus Consolidated Government have formed a partnership using
local funding to administering a transition program for transitional inmates. The local WIA has joined this partnership through the provision of on-the-job training opportunities for interested employers who hire these individuals.

The Division of Rehabilitation Services utilizes its funding to assess TANF and potential rehabilitation clients, in addition to providing normal services to eligible customers. Local WIA funding has been awarded the Division to provide work experience for out-of-school youth with special needs. Other WIA funds are utilized to provide eligibility determination services, assessment services, case management services, and funding of various training activities.

19. An important feature of the customer-focused system under WIA is increased options for accessing workforce services. Discuss steps your area is taking to address increased options, such as: alternative access points, self-directed and electronic services, development of resource areas, orientation to services, enhanced reception/greeter functions, or service referral mechanisms for various customer groups at various sites within your system. **What steps has your area taken to ensure the high volume of customers seeking WIA services receive timely services and/or referrals?** Review and incorporate ETA’s National Strategic Directions (TEGL 13-06) – “System Reform and an Increased Focus on Workforce Education and Training” as appropriate.

In order to allow customers, in area communities that have a limited physical presence by all partners and access to workforce service, the feasibility of placing electronic access to informational and/or self-help services at alternative sites, at counties other than Muscogee, continues to be explored.

In addition, a WIA staff representative is out-stationed in the Randolph County DFCS office and provides services to Randolph, Stewart, Clay, and Quitman Counties. This staff person visits each county DFCS office on a rotating basis. Due to the close proximity of Chattahoochee, Harris, and Talbot counties to the local area one-stop centers that are situated in Muscogee County, accessibility to services is not challenging for many of the residents in these areas. Access points, however, have been positioned at various cross-sections of our workforce area to ensure ease of accessibility for customers to services and information. In addition, to the comprehensive center, itinerate sites are located throughout the workforce area.

20. If the local area has chosen to contract with institutions of higher education and other training providers, please describe plans to increase the availability of training in high-demand occupations to workforce
system customers, including the process to be used in selecting service providers under a contract for services, as required per 20 CFR 663.43). What training institutions and industries will be targeted? What steps will be taken to ensure customer choice will not be limited? (TEGL 23-10)

The Columbus Consolidated Government has contracted with various institutions of higher education and other training providers, either through formal procurement or through individual training accounts in its efforts to ensure the availability of training in high-demand occupations to workforce customers of the local workforce area. Additionally, during the current program year (PY2011) local area funding was awarded to Columbus Technical College to provide enrollment opportunities to eligible WIA customers seeking occupational skills training in their newly created Advanced Manufacturing and Certified Manufacturing Specialist course, designed to avert the outsourcing of the few remaining manufacturing businesses that are stationed in the area. This course is designed to provide skills training that meets the needs of the existing manufacturing employers in the local area in efforts to deter potential downsizing and outsourcing and re-stimulate the resurgence and growth of new employers to the area.

21. Discuss how the local area plans to prepare workers for the energy efficiency and renewable energy industries and other green jobs through additional training and certification activities.

To prepare workers for the energy efficiency and renewable energy industries and other green jobs, the Local Area continues to partner with schools and other agencies to provide educational assistance and work experience opportunities for individuals requiring assistance. The local area continues to identify, network and form partnerships with energy efficiency and renewable energy industries and other green job initiatives in the local area.

22. If the area has chosen to allow up to 20% of local WIA Dislocated Worker formula funds for Incumbent Worker Training for purposes of layoff aversion [per the state waiver under WIA Section 189(i)(4)(B)], please describe. If the area does not offer Incumbent Worker Training services, please explain.

The local area has not used the state waiver per WIA Section 189 (i)(4)(b) which allows the use of up to 20% of WIA Dislocated Worker formula funds for Incumbent Worker training at this time. However, during the early part of 2010 when pressures on the school district to layoff a number of paraprofessionals and teachers was being discussed due to funding constraints, consideration was given by the local
workforce area to utilize formula funds to avert these layoffs. Use of 
this waiver will be assessed and considered should the need arise and 
circumstances warrant its use.

23. Discuss the local area’s efforts to promote On-the-Job Training (OJT) 
and Customized Training (CT) in the business community. Has the area 
chosen to adjust OJT reimbursement or the employer contribution 
requirement for CT using a sliding scale based on the size of the 
employer [per the state waiver under WIA Section 189(i)(4)(B)]? If the 
area does not offer OJT services, please explain.

The local area has collaborated with the GDAC initiative of Columbus 
Technical College and the Columbus Consolidated Government’s Crime 
Prevention Department to provide On-the-Job Training for offenders 
transitioning into the workplace. As with all services, the local Board 
continues to promote partnerships. In accordance with the state waiver 
under WIA Section 189(i)(4)(B), the local area has chosen to use adjust 
OJT reimbursements based upon the size of the employer.

VI. Performance Accountability

1. **NOTE:** Instructions for estimating performance levels for PY 2011 will 
be transmitted to local areas in a separate memo.

The PY 2011 negotiated performance levels for the local area is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Adults</th>
<th>Dislocated Workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entered Employment Rate</td>
<td>77.5%</td>
<td>79.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention Rate</td>
<td></td>
<td>86.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Earnings (Adults/Dislocated Workers)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placement in Employment or Education</td>
<td>Youth (14-21)</td>
<td>47.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attainment of Degree or Certificate</td>
<td>Youth (14-21)</td>
<td>76.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy or Numeracy Gains</td>
<td>Youth (14-21)</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Describe local strategies for obtaining and using customer feedback to ensure customer satisfaction.

The common statewide system adopted by the State will be utilized. As 
information is received from the State System, the LWIB and partners will be 
provided with the information. In addition the LWIB, Administrative Entity and 
partners will utilize the information to examine programs and/or services to 
improve the System.

Currently, the local area is in the planning stages of developing a system of that
will allow customers to provide feedback on services electronically rather than providing comment cards to customers (employers and job seekers) in order to obtain their remarks concerning services received through the One-Stop System. This system will be similar to those currently utilized by many agencies to copulate data that will assist with continuous improvement efforts of services.

3. Describe the board's strategies and process for evaluating the system's progress in meeting the needs of employers and individuals in the community, including how the board is promoting continuous quality improvement of the local system.

The local board continues to implement strategies and ensures ongoing progress for meeting the needs of employers and individuals in the community. Promoting continuous quality improvements of the local system include conducting ongoing workforce analyses that includes:

- Continued exploration of more specific and updated information regarding the skill sets and educational requirements required by local employers.
- Follow-up of the economic impact analysis as needed.
- Continued assessment of education and skill levels and job categories of projected population.
  - Conduct surveys as needed to better understand the types of jobs, qualifications, and to what extent job seekers plan to work.
- Continuous monitoring of the system, and its design, in promoting quality improvement of the local system

4. Discuss specific steps the local area has taken to ensure transparency and accountability of all local workforce funding.

The local area continues to incorporate various steps to ensure transparency and accountability of all local workforce funding. Quarterly performance, programmatic, compliance, and fiscal monitoring are conducted that is reviewed by the local workforce board. Submission of the various reports regarding WIA financial reporting is published on the City of Columbus’ Website. Bi-weekly reviews of data reports have begun to ensure tracking of participant enrollments and outcomes. Additionally, the local area mandates heavy utilization of the e-verify system to ensure that individuals provided WIA assistance for employment or educational opportunities are eligible to work in the United States.

Various access points are located throughout the workforce area to assist individuals in making quality choices with regard to training needs and provider services that are available. Quarterly training is conducted for providers and one-stop partners in the local area. Employers and individuals in the community can access complete data on the local workforce area through
5. **Discuss anticipated program design changes related to Georgia’s move to common measures effective July 1, 2011.**

Due to anticipated program design changes related to Georgia’s move to common measures, the local workforce area continues to focus on connecting employers to skilled workers, and connecting workers to good jobs as reflected in the common performance measures. Several changes to the program design have been implemented and others being considered as our local workforce system is transforming into a demand-driven system that result in more individuals being trained for high skilled jobs in high growth, and high-demand industries.

Streamlining the existing referral process through the one-stop system has been one way of addressing easier accessibility of customers to the various WIA services offered. More emphasis is being placed on short-term training opportunities and promoting the accessibility to certain certificate programs such as certified nursing, commercial drivers training, and other short term training that is aligned with specific demand driven occupations identified in the local area.

VII. **Equal Access and Opportunity**

1. Briefly describe local procedures and staffing to address grievances and complaint resolution.

   *The Lower Chattahoochee Area has in place established grievance and complaint resolution policies and procedures to respond to problems, disputes, and appeals. An EEO representative is designated to receive all such complaints and addresses all issues in accordance with these policies and procedures.*

   Applicants, clients, WIA funded employees, and/or recipients of WIA funds, One-Stop partners, and other interested parties affected by the local Workforce Investment System, who allege violations of the Workforce Investment Act, regulations, grants, or other agreements/contracts (other than complaints of discrimination,) will use the Lower Chattahoochee Area grievance policy to respond to problems, disputes, and appeals. A EEO representative is appointed to receive and address all complaints and issues in accordance with the policies and procedures established by the local workforce area.

2. Describe how the local area is ensuring full accessibility of sites and services. Examples include: an accessibility checklist on which staff have been trained, assistive technology in resource rooms, and ongoing coordination, training and mutual referrals with community rehabilitation providers.
The Comprehensive One-Stop (Georgia Department of Labor, Columbus Career Center) is a state agency that meets accessibility criteria established by the State. Other state and local government and non-government partners are also involved in ensuring full accessibility of sites and services, such as assistive technology, ongoing coordination, mutual referrals with community rehabilitation providers, and staff training, which also meet the accessibility criteria.

The following examples depict systems and resources that are in place in the local area to ensure full accessibility of these sites and services to individuals in the local area.

➢ The Comprehensive One-stop Center’s resource area is equipped with the following assistive technology in its Resource Room (area):
  o CCTV Low Vision Reader,
  o A 21” monitor, key guards, headphones and cassette players,
  o Telephone amplifier,
  o Antiglare Monitor filter,
  o VERA (Very Easy Reading Appliance),
  o Talking dictionary, and talking calculator,
  o Hearing Helper Personal FM system,
  o TTY system, and,
  o Other software such as: Zoom Text, Level II, Connect Out Loud, Kensington Track Ball, Kurzwell 1000 and 3000, and Dragon Naturally Speaking.

The local Vocational Rehabilitation Services Division, one of the partners co-located at the Center, has provided some staff training on use of various assistive technology equipments that is available at the site. This training will continue as the need arises.

➢ The Department of Vocational Rehabilitation Services is a partner at the Comprehensive One-stop Site. Training of all One-Stop Partner staff regarding the services available has been ongoing and includes conducting physical accessibility surveys. In addition, the local area will continue its coordination with Vocational Rehabilitation Services to ensure these physical accessibility surveys are conducted at partner/provider sites and present the results along with any recommendations on a periodic schedule to be determined by the Local Board.

3. Describe the local area’s policy for ensuring priority of service for covered persons, e.g., veterans and eligible spouses, how local area service providers ensure priority of service, and how GDOL employment services to veterans, are integrated into the local workforce system.
In accordance with 20 CFR Section 663.600, and WIA Section 134(d)(4)(E), if limited funding is declared in the local area, recipients of public assistance and other low income economically disadvantaged adults would receive priority of service for intensive and training services. Additionally, in accordance with the Jobs for Veterans Act (P.L. 107-288) and its corresponding regulations (20 CFR Part 1010), in the context of the policy established by the local workforce area, veterans and eligible spouses are also identified as covered persons and are also entitled to priority of services over non-covered persons seeking assistance with employment, training, and placement services.

The local GDOL/One-Stop includes a veteran staff of Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialists (DVOP) and local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER) who provides employment and outreach services to the local veterans population.

One-stop representatives conduct an initial inquiry on all individuals seeking services through the local one-stop center to determine service(s) requested, service needs, appropriateness of service(s), and the availability or accessibility of services through the one stop system. All unregistered persons seeking services through the local one-stop center are required to complete a pre-screening package that also contains a list of all available services in the one-stop center. The information contained in the prescreening packages are designed to capture basic background information used by one-stop staff in efforts to provide quality customer service throughout the individual’s transition through the one-stop system.

Once the individual has been identified as meeting the criteria of “covered persons”, representatives of the Veterans Unit will place the individual on the career center’s system notification log for further assistance. The Veterans Unit will assess eligibility and where applicable provide appropriate services and/or coordinate with other units/agencies to ensure that all services identified for veterans are given priority.

Individuals seeking assistance via phone/e-mail inquiries are properly screened to determine their status as a covered or non-covered person. Additionally, the GDOL web-based system has embedded specific questions that assist one-stop staff in determining if an individual meets the definition of covered persons. Priority of services is given to all phone/email inquiries that meet the standards for covered persons as required. Internet referrals received at the local One-Stop Center through the local web-based system (other than GWS) are highlighted in red and calls made to assess appropriate avenue of service.
self-identify will be routed to Veterans Unit for continued determination. Individuals, who do not meet the criteria, will be redirected to appropriate unit for further processing. Individuals who meet the criteria will be further processed to ensure priority of service is provided as appropriate.

To ensure covered persons receive access prior to non-covered persons, first priority will be given to the covered person; second priority to recipients of public assistance and other low-income economically disadvantaged adults. This process, however, should in no way impact services that are currently being provided to non-covered persons. (For instance, if a workshop has been filled and a covered person has been identified in need of the workshop, efforts will be made to ensure that the covered person receives the service. This may mean reallocating additional slots to ensure that the person receives the service.

Priority of Service for covered persons will be transmitted to One-Stop staff and service providers as well as new staff through our local area’s quarterly training sessions with the providers and one-stop staff; and, through regular communication such as written memorandum, staff meetings, etc. In addition, technical assistance is made available upon request and provided for all new WIA staff and service provider staff as needed. Also, a new hire orientation for new staff members of the One-Stop Center is also provided; this will include Priority of Service information for all new staff members. WIA has monitoring procedures of its own and the Administrative Entity monitors the Service Providers regularly and issues reports to the Providers. The monitoring procedures will be changed to include monitoring of Priority of Services for eligible clients. Also, Priority of Services will be made a part of all financial contract agreements.

4. Describe the area's efforts to address the needs of customers with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). Key elements include staff, technology and availability of materials in languages prevalent in the area.

The Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Area is comprised of a diverse group of individuals, from various ethnicities, cultures and socio-economic backgrounds. The diverse composition of this area is partly due to the presence of the Fort Benning military installation. Although English is the prevalent language, a large segment of the population speak English as a second language, with Spanish being the predominate language. Through the Georgia Department of Labor, a Multi-lingual Directory has been provided as one of the resources staff utilizes when working with customers with limited English proficiency (LEP). Additionally, staff members requiring an interpreter can also
access the toll-free language interpreter hotline that enables the individuals to conduct meaningful communication with the participant through joint conferencing with the individual and interpreter. Additionally, the local area has maintained partnerships with interpreter services at Fort Benning or the Muscogee County School District that are also available as needed.

5. Where applicable, describe how outreach and recruitment services to Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs) are integrated into the local workforce system. Additionally, discuss any specific local or regional service strategies for working collaboratively with business and industry and the education community to develop strategies to overcome barriers to skill achievement and employment experienced by migrant and seasonal farmworkers, and to ensure they are being identified as a critical pipeline of workers (TEGL 17-10).

Due to the location of the workforce area, there is minimal utilization or need for migrant and seasonal farmworker programs in our local area. Although no specific local strategies have been identified to serve this population, migrant and seasonal farm workers will be provided the same range and quality of services as non-migrants, and equity of service will be afforded to migrant and seasonal farm workers in all labor exchange services provided in the area. [20 C.F.R., Part 653]

VIII. Plan Attachments

Attachment A: Area Sites and Services
Please complete and submit the matrix.

Attachment B: Memoranda of Understanding/Resource Sharing Agreements
Please submit a sample Memorandum of Understanding/Resource Sharing Agreement from one comprehensive One-Stop here.
NOTE: Accurate, complete, and current agreements must be available for review upon request and during onsite program reviews.

Attachment C: Performance Worksheets
NOTE: Instructions for estimating performance levels for PY 2011 will be transmitted to local areas in a separate memo.

Attachment D: Local Area Assurances
The attached local assurances were developed to address provisions of the Workforce Investment Act and the Final Rule. By virtue of signatures with submission of the plan, the local area agrees to abide by these provisions.